

Contributions

TWO VIEWS OF THE MISSION OF WEALTH

B. C. MOOMAW

Perhaps it is not altogether idle curiosity that we wish sometimes to know what is passing in the mind of a world renowned genius, one who has distinguished himself in some great enterprise, achieved wealth, fame and power, moulded the destinies of a nation. One such man now living is Cecil Rhodes, in South Africa, who has not only amassed great wealth in the diamond mines, but as a political force in the colonies stands head and shoulders above all the rest. He is worth many millions of dollars, dug out of the earth for the most part by native labor, not always well paid or well treated. This diamond king made a speech to the stockholders of his company the other day which contains some remarkable passages. He said that the shareholders were "divided into two classes, the imaginative and the unimaginative." "The latter passed their lives filling money bags that are dissipated by their offspring on wine, women and horses." "The imaginative," he said, "were pursuing wealth as a means of civilization, and felt a glow of satisfaction at the thought that the immense riches taken from the soil had not been merely devoted to the decoration of the fair sex."

Observing people have long seen the tendency of great wealth to demoralize its possessors, especially in the second and third generations. By industry and thrift a man accumulates a fortune, and his children, seeing no necessity for exertion, relapse first into habits of idleness, and then into some form of dissipation. The lesson, however, seems to go unheeded among wealthy men who continue to sacrifice the morals, the reputation, the usefulness, the happiness, the immortal souls of their children to the money god. Now and then a man like Mr. Rhodes or Mr. Carnegie utters a note of warning, and endeavors to inculcate the higher office of wealth, to promote advancing civilization and the happiness of the masses. Here and there we see isolated instances of a millionaire devoting a few of his surplus millions to education, or some other form of usefulness and benevolence, but for the most part, the vast majority of the world's moneybags are destitute of what Mr. Rhodes calls imagination. The future may take care of itself. Their business is to take care of No. 1. Money brings the power to purchase pleasure. Gratification is their supreme idea of life. The malady is much deeper than a mere difference in imagination. It is profoundly moral. It goes to the bottom of the man.

There is undoubtedly such a thing in the Christian world as the consecration of wealth, such a thing as a high moral purpose in the pursuit of wealth, but it is not widely diffused. It is a kind of mental and moral exaltation that is rare. It is a Lot in the midst of a Sodom. It is commendable undoubtedly, tho it comes perilously near doing evil that good

may come. This brings us to remark that the accumulation of money, or what we call property, is in itself one of those evils resulting from the general moral depravity of the world, and inseparable from it. It is, for example and by way of contrast, inconceivable that there is such a thing as property, or money, or private ownership in heaven. Do you suppose for an instant that Brother Shifty will own several of the most desirable corner lots in the New Jerusalem? Will he acquire a long row of tenement mansions on Congregational Steet, and rent them to you and me at a pretty tall figure? Will he have a crown noted for the extraordinary number and brilliancy of its jewels, just because he had the money to buy it? Will his income be fifty times greater than his needs, while some poor saints on Busy Avenue have to scuffle to keep up appearances? All this train of ideas, every conception cognate to the idea of property, is so foreign even to the faint picture we have of a perfect society as to be absurd. We do not admit them for a moment. We can in this comparative light see at a glance that the idea of property, of wealth, is a logical sequence of an imperfect, if not of an evil, social state. It is a crystallization of selfishness. It is the product of unbelief. Faith says, "Take no thought for the morrow, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink or where withal ye shall be clothed, for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." Unbelief says, "Better lay up something for a rainy day." Common sense, which is a rational application of the principles of faith to inevitable conditions, teaches us to use our gift, but to the glory of God. If I have a talent for business, why there are churches to build, missions to support, the Gospel to sustain, the poor to help, education to promote. Are these not God's works? They are, verily, but we should see to it that we do not make these things a hiding place for selfishness. Let there be as much doing as saying. *"God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap"* Remember this in connection with the claims of the Washington mission, our Chicago work, Ashland college, the Publishing House. If these are God's works, let us make them strong. If they are not of God, let us throw them over. Let us either be cold or hot, lest we be spued out of the mouth of the Lord.

THE MASTER'S TOUCH

W. A. WELTY

"And he stretched forth his hand and touched him" Matt. 8:3.

The subject is one suggested by some verses of poetry, and has been of great help to me. The sculptor with chisel and mallet in hand works on in patience until his ideal is wrought out in the piece of work before him. It is not the first tap, neither the last that accomplishes the work, but the first and the last and all between. It is Jesus the great Sculptor that would touch us with his hand divine and work out in us the ideal of

a perfect man. The same powerful hand that touched the bier on which the dead lay and caused him to raise up, will touch us and make us living witnesses of his wonderful power. The Master's touch is the conviction of sin, the transforming work in regeneration, the sanctifying power in our life, and that keeps us always rejoicing in God thru Christ.

It is the outpouring and infilling of the Holy Spirit of God. It is God emptying us of sin and filling us with himself. That magic touch, how we all need it to raise us out of self into God. It was the leper who went to Him and said, "If thou wilt thou canst make me clean." The leprosy of sin, how great an affliction! But the Master's touch will make the filthiest clean. We may lack in enthusiasm. The Master's touch will cause us to encounter great things for him. We may want for zeal; His touch will fill our hearts with a burning zeal for the promotion of righteousness. There is a need of cultivation of spiritual power in the individual life. Go to Him and he will put forth his hand and touch you and make you strong in the inner man. There is an imperceptible influence that goes forth from the life that has come in contact with the Christ and been filled with all the fullness of God. The church that bears upon it the finger prints of Jesus will be pure and as a result there will be peace, union and brotherly love. Is there any that needs that touch?

The Sunday-school, the C. E. Society, the S. S. C. E., toward which Christ has put his hand with his sanctifying touch, will be a glory to God and an uplifting power in the world. The choir that has experienced his touch will be at peace and discord will be unknown, for every one will have the welfare of the church at heart, and will be able to sing acceptable praise to God.

That God might be served with a true heart, that Christ might put forth his hand and purge us of all dross and make us every whit whole.

"In the still air the music lies unheard;
In the rough marble beauty hides unseen;
To make the music and the beauty, needs
A master's touch, the sculptor's chisel keen.
Great Master, touch us with thy skillful hand;
Let not the music that is in us die!
Great Sculptor, hew and polish us; nor let,
Hidden and lost, Thy form within us lie!
Spare not the stroke! Do with us as thou wilt!
Let there be naught unfinished, broken, marred;
Complete Thy purpose, that we may become
The perfect image, thou our God and Lord."

Louisville, O.

FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE

S. KIEHL

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. I Jno. 3:14. Let us not reverse the order of this law of God. We cannot by trying to love the brethren pass from a state of death unto a state of life. Life is received by a living faith in the Son of God. Having this life, love for the brethren will be a natural product of the renewed heart, a fruit of the Spirit. Christ dwells in the heart by faith.